MS # P-041 11

GERMAN ARMY HIGH COMMAND

Comments on MSS # P-041a - P-041 hh

by

Generaloberst a.D. Kurt Zeitzler
Chief of the Army General Staff, September 1942 - June 1944

and

Generaloberst a.D. Heinz Guderian
Chief of the Army General Staff, July 1944 - March 1945

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Heinz Wilhelm GUDERIAN
Generaloberst a.D.
Date of birth: 17 June 1888
Place of birth: Kulm on the Vistula
(now Polish territory)

At the age of thirteen GUDERIAN joined the Cadet Corps in Karlsruhe in Baden, one of the southern States of Germany. Two years later, in 1903, he was transferred to the Chief Cadet Center at Berlin-Lichterfelde, from which he graduated in 1907, in which year he joined the X Jaeger Battalion as an officer candidate. In January 1908, after a year at the Metz Officer Training School, he received his commission as second lieutenant with rank dated June 1906. After further service in field units he attended the Berlin War Academy in 1913-14.

Throughout World War I GUDERIAN served in various posts, rotating between field units and General Staff appointments and in 1918 was awarded General Staff Corps status. During the inter-war period he served as company commander, technical staff officer in the Reichswehr (Defense) Ministry, as general staff officer in divisional staffs and in the Transportation Staff of the Reichswehr Ministry, commander of a motor transport battalion, chief of staff in the Motor Transport Inspectorate, chief of staff of the Panzer Forces Command (Kommando der Panzertruppe), Commanding General, 2d Panzer Division, Commanding General XVI Infantry Corps and finally as Chief of Mobile Forces.

Promoted colonel in 1933, Generalmajor in 1936, Generalleutnant in February and General der Panzer in November 1938, General GUDERIAN was placed in command of the XIX Panzer Corps when World War II broke out on 1 September 1939. It was while in command of this panzer corps that the general carried out the operations in Poland that brought him fame and made him the most popular panzer commander in Germany.

At the end of the Polish campaign General GUDERIAN was transferred to the West Front with his corps and in June 1940 was placed in command of Panzergruppe*

* A panzer army without rear zone administrative echelon.

GUDERIAN, with which he took part in the French campaign. It was during this assignment, in July 1940, that GUDERIAN was promoted Generaloberst. In June 1941 he was transferred with his panzergruppe to the East Front and in October of the same year the panzergruppe was reorganized into an army, the Second Panzer Army.

In December 1941 the General was relieved of his command and placed in the Army High Command General Officer Reserve. His next assignment, in February 1943, was as Inspector General of Panzer Forces on all fronts, which assignment he held until the cessation of hostilities. In addition to this post, General GUDERIAN served as Acting Chief of the Army General Staff from July 1944 to March 1945. He was finally captured near Zell am See, Tyrol, on 10 May 1945.

Kurt ZEITZLER
Generaloberst a.D.
Date of birth: 9 June 1895
Place of birth: Gossmar, Province of Brandenburg

ZEITZLER joined the infantry in March 1914, after graduating from high school, and in December of the same year was promoted second lieutenant, with rank dated June 1913. Throughout World War I he fought on the West Front as a platoon, company and regimental commander. At the end of the war he remained in the reduced Army Germany was allowed to maintain and after the usual training was granted General Staff Corps status in 1927.

When World War II broke out in September 1939, ZEITZLER, a colonel by now, was in command of a regiment. He was transferred immediately to XXII Corps as Chief of Staff and took part in the Polish Campaign. Then he was assigned, again as Chief of Staff, to Panzer Group A*, with which he participated in the French Campaign.

Following an assignment as Chief of Staff, First Panzer Army, in Russia in 1941, and another as Chief of Staff, Army Group D, in France in 1942, ZEITZLER, who had been promoted Generalmajor in January of the latter year, received double promotion to General der Infanterie nine months later in September 1942, and was appointed Chief of the Army General Staff.

Promoted Generaloberst in January 1944, the general resigned from his post as Chief of the Army General Staff in July of that year after violent differences of opinion with Hitler on the conduct of operations. He was placed in the Army High Command Officer Reserve Pool and in January 1945 was retired from the Army.

* A panzer army minus rear administrative echelons.

On 6 December 1945 the general was taken into custody by the British and was held prisoner until 26 February 1947.

CONTENTS PAGE

1. MS # P-041 a, Preface and Survey of the Army High Command, 1938 - 1945. 1

2. MS # P-041 b, Field Headquarters of the Army High Command 8

3. MS # P-041 c, Position of the Army High Command within the Wehrmacht High Command and P-041 d, Chief of the Army General Staff 8

4. MS # P-041 e, The Operations Branch. 11

5. MS # P-041 f, The Organization Branch. 11

6. MS # P-041 g, The Training Branch. 14

7. MSS # P-041 h-j, The Intelligence Service. 18

8. MS # P-041 k, The Army Chief Signal Officer. 19

9. MS # P-041 m, The Chief Infantry Officer. 20

10. MS # P-041 n, The Chief Artillery Officer. 20

11. MS # P-041 o, The Chief Engineer Officer 21

12. MS # P-041 g, The Chief of Supply and Administration . . .22

13. MSS # P-041 r-u, The Transportation Service. 24

14. MS # P-041 w, The Mapping and Survey Branch. 27

15. MS # P-041 x, The Central Branch. 28

16. MS # P-041 y, General for Special Assignments. 29

17. MS # P-041 z, The Branch for Army Matters 29

18. MS # P-041 aa, The Headquarters Commandant. 29

19. MSS # P-041 bb - cc, Liaison Officers. 30

20. MS # P-041 dd, The Chief of Army Equipment and Commander of the Replacement Army. 31

CONTENTS (CONT) PAGE

21. MS # P-041 ee, The General Army Office. 31
22. MS # P-041 ff, The Army Ordnance Office 31
23. MS # P-041 gg, The Army Administration Office 32
24. MS # P-041 hh, The Army Personnel Office. 33

1. MS # P-041a, Preface and Survey of the Army High Command, 1938 - 1945

a. Comments by General Zeitzler. The following sentences "The Wehrmacht High Command, which was at the same time the superior of the Army High Command ..." is incorrect. As far as I can recall the Wehrmacht High Command was at no time the superior of the Army High Command.

The author himself expresses this view on page 7, where he states "The fact that the Commander in Chief of the Army was subordinate to the Fuehrer and Supreme Commander of the Wehrmacht does not necessarily mean that the Army High Command was subordinate to the Wehrmacht High Command". It is unknown to me whether this situation changed during the very last part of the war.

The text, sketches and charts of MS # P-041 a give a clear and comprehensive picture of the general organization, duties and responsibilities of the individual branches of the Army High Command between 1938 and 1945. The author's appraisal of this organization is also to the point.

The causes of the conflicts between the Army High Command and the Wehrmacht High Command have been clearly pointed out. These difficulties became still more pronounced later in the war because of the course pursued by higher echelons.* In order to round out the picture, the author also has described organizational changes which were planned on the higher

* This subject will be discussed in greater detail in MS # P-041 ii under the title "ARMY GENERAL STAFF - WEHRMACHT HIGH COMMAND - WEHRMACHT OPERATIONS STAFF RELATIONS."

level but which were averted.

The Luftwaffe field divisions mentioned on page 14 were a perfect example of bad organization and therefore were commonly referred to as "The Luftwaffe Malconstruction."* The reasons for and the nature of the organization controlling the Luftwaffe field divisions are very instructive and interesting, but a detailed discussion of the subject would be beside the point in this study.

b. Comments by General Guderian. Up to the end of March 1945 the Wehrmacht High Command was not "the superior of the Army High Command." One of the most regrettable mistakes of the military leaders of the pre-war period was their failure to resolve "the conflict which found its natural expression in the ambiguities and internal contradictions of the formal top-level organization of the Wehrmacht." This conflict had to be decided in actual practice by "political factors," namely, by Adolf Hitler. Hitler was just as fully aware of the "ambiguities and internal contradictions" as he was of the fact that the men concerned rejected his ideas and in many cases also disapproved of him. He also knew the weakness of the military leaders and the lack of unity among them.

The Army, or more correctly a group of its oldest generals, was obsessed by the idea that even in the age of the airplane, the submarine and the tank it had to assert "its traditional position" as the dominant part of a purely continental power. For these generals the infantry was still the chief arm. All other arms were regarded as secondary, and it

* Luftwaffenfehlkonstruktion.

they could no longer be ignored they were felt to be a nuisance and were kept down accordingly. This attitude was the source of the bitter opposition to any large-scale development of the Luftwaffe and the tank arm, as well as against a uniform, modern system of command of the Armed Forces as a whole and the beginnings of this system in the Wehrmacht High Command and the Wehrmacht Akademie.*

These senior generals dominated the Army General Staff and pursued a personnel policy which insured that the leading General Staff positions in the Central Branch were always occupied by men of their way of thinking. They also succeeded in preventing any strengthening of the influence of the Wehrmacht High Command and even the creation of an Armed Forces General Staff.

Therefore, this group very soon aroused Hitler's distrust, a distrust which Goering and the Party also shared and which was never removed. Hitler's distrust found its first expression in the establishment of the Waffen SS. The next step was the dismissal of the Minister of War, von Blomberg, whose position was assumed by Hitler himself as Supreme Commander of the Wehrmacht.

The simultaneous dismissal of the Commander in Chief of the Army, Freiherr von Fritsch, under unsavory circumstances, showed as early as 4 February 1938 how far Hitler's original respect for the top-level military command had declined. The successor of General von Fritsch did not succeed in securing full satisfaction for the affront which the Army had suffered. The circles concerned failed to react appropriately to this fact

* The German equivalent of the US National War College (Reviewer).

and Hitler's respect declined still further.

Differences of opinion became more acute over the Sudeten and Polish policies and the question of rearmament with the result was that "the Commander in Chief of the Army was excluded, even before the war, from all strategic planning and the forming of political decisions." Even this "exclusion" was accepted in silence.

The silence with which the responsible leaders accepted these measures, which they now condemn so vehemently, was interpreted by the younger officers as implied approval. These younger officers could not conceive that their superiors would accept without a struggle and without proper action a development which those superiors, as they now allege, clearly recognized as disadvantageous and even pernicious. However, this is precisely what happened, and it happened at a time when it was still possible to offer resistance — in peacetime!

Chapter 2 describes the "behind-the-scenes struggle for power" between the Army and Wehrmacht High Commands (page 11aff.). This unhappy fratricidal conflict between the leading officers of the Army in the Wehrmacht and Army High Commands gave Hitler a pretext for intervening in military affairs, because he perceived that without his help the Wehrmacht High Command would be unable to overcome the stiff resistance of the Army High Command. It is no wonder that this struggle for power had a "disorganizing" effect. The Army High Command was primarily to blame for this, for the Wehrmacht High Command was undoubtedly the top-level military authority of the Reich and could easily have obtained adequate powers and efficient men

if the Army High Command had only cooperated intelligently. Military leadership during a war is not obtained by "coordination" but by "commands". If the top-level military agency is denied the proper command authority, one must not be surprised if the head of the state intervenes. The consequences then become evident as "symptoms of disorganisation" (page 13).

The disaster of Stalingrad (page 15) can hardly be attributed in any considerable degree to the increase in armament. To the best of my knowledge, the chief causes were Hitler's military mistakes and Goering's promises of logistic support, which could not be kept.

The attempted assassination of Hitler on 20 July 1944 no longer affected the position of the Commander in Chief of the Army (page 20) in any way, since this position no longer existed.

In 1939 the Commander in Chief of the Army had created an organization mistakenly designed for a short war. In doing so, he deprived himself of many of his former command responsibilities (page 20) and restricted himself to the planning and conduct of operations. To a large extent he thereby rendered his own post superfluous.

It cannot be said (page 24) that Generaloberst Halder was dismissed in 1942 because "the influence of education and example were displaced in ever-growing measure by threats and propaganda". Things were not as simple as all that, either then or later. The main reason was probably the lack of mutual confidence.

Allegedly "the structure of the organisation was recklessly destroyed"

by the powers given to the newly appointed Inspector General of Panzer Troops (page 25) on 1 March 1943. Actually, however, the reason why Hitler placed the Inspector General under his own direct command instead of under the Chief of the Army General Staff was that by February 1943 the panzer troops had lost so much of their striking power that a further decline rather than an improvement was to be expected if the chain of command remained unchanged. There were no "encroachments in other fields which ran counter to the interests of the command", and none are cited by the author.

Hitler's order (page 30) transferring responsibility for General Staff personnel matters to the Personnel Office was issued at the request of General Schmundt, who himself had come from the General Staff. It was also supported by Keitel and Jodl, and General Staff Corps officers, who agreed with Hitler's plans to weaken and even destroy the General Staff. Thus, the source of the infection was in the General Staff itself.

In my opinion, the strategic importance of the national fortifications (page 35) was underestimated until 1944, while the Training Branch was assigned missions which were in part excessive.

The important positions of a Chief of Supply and Administration, a Chief Signal Officer and a Chief of Army Transportation did not exist in peacetime. They could easily have been created while dispensing with superfluous positions in the supply sections (pages 33, 38 and 39).

The transfer of the Historical Branch to the Wehrmacht High Command (page 40) is very severely criticized. It was intended that military

history would continue to be written by Army officers, but would now be accessible to all.

The appointment of the Inspector General of Panzer Troops did not increase friction in the field of motor transportation (page 54). On the contrary, friction was reduced by standardization and economy.

The Chiefs of Arms and Services attached to the Commander in Chief of the Army (page 70) did not really have a very large field of activity. Above all, they had no influence on the Replacement Army, the preparation of field manuals, or the conduct of schools.

The Chief of Mobile Troops (page 72) had no "considerably enlarged authority". His ideas on the possibilities for the employment of the new arm were not "immature" and did not require clarification. This probably applied only in the field of the General Staff of the Army High Command.

The Stalingrad defeat (page 73) had nothing to do with the authority of the Inspector General of Panzer Troops. The Inspector General had no "decisive influence on the resources of the zone of the interior." He was bound by the decisions of the Wehrmacht replacement authorities.

None of the "numerous cases of friction" (page 74) allegedly caused by the authority of the Inspector General came to my attention and no such cases are cited by the contributor, who has no personal experience in this field. In matters relating to armor, the chief of the Army General Staff could at any time consult the Inspector General whose office was in his immediate vicinity. A special representative of the panzer troops at

his staff was therefore superfluous.

2. MS # P-041 b, Field Headquarters of the Army High Command

a. Comments by General Zeitzler. MS # P-041 b gives an accurate account of the organization and working procedure of the field headquarters of the Army High Command.

The working procedure at the time when Hitler was Commander in Chief of the Army will be discussed in Chapter 2 of MS # P-041 ii.

b. General Guderian has no comments to make.

3. MS # P-041 c, Position of the Army High Command within the Wehrmacht High Command and P-041 d, Chief of the Army General Staff

a. Comments by General Zeitzler. These two manuscripts, with their sub-divisions on the duties and working procedure of the top-level echelons, on the Chief of the Army General Staff and on the direction of the Army General Staff, are perhaps the most important part of the entire study. They give a clear account of the position, the fundamental duties and the character of the top-level command agencies of the Army and the work of the Army General Staff in all its aspects. Through many years of uniform schooling and the standard way of thinking practiced by the German General Staff Corps, certain basic principles had become so throughly ingrained in all of the older General Staff Corps officers that they were unaffected by the many reorganizations which took place in the course of the war and remained fundamentally intact despite all the limitations imposed on the Army General Staff and all opposition to the General Staff Corps by the "top" level. Only this fact made it possible for the Army

and its branches to be commanded at all.

However, the main emphasis in these two manuscripts is on the pre-war period and the two first phases of the war. Both of the last phases of the war have been dealt with only superficially, in certain parts only briefly referred to. To complete the picture these last phases also must be discussed fully, so that the necessary critical conclusions can be drawn, lessons learned and possible ideas developed for the future. Therefore, these two manuscripts, in particular, require a supplement dealing with command problems and the Army General Staff during the missing period.

b. Comments by General Guderian. Hitler was not only influenced by the weakness shown by the Commander in Chief of the Army in failing to obtain satisfaction for Generaloberst Freiherr von Fritsch (page 8). He also accused the Commander in Chief of failing to support his policy in the questions of rearmament, the occupation of the Rhineland, the annexation of Austria, the Sudeten crisis and the armament plants and found fault with his personal circumstances. He also failed to develop better relations with Generals Beck and Halder.

The basic idea of the French campaign (page 10) came from General von Manstein. The tanks were stopped before reaching Dunkerque "in order to leave the destruction of the British to the Luftwaffe."

The demands made upon the Head of the State (page 11- 12) in respect to the position of the Commander in Chief of the Army are pure theory. The decisive factor is the personality of the incumbent.

The allegation (page 15) that all attack air forces remained "completely

under the command" of the Luftwaffe is not entirely correct. In France and at the beginning of the Russian campaign in 1941, close-support commands of the Luftwaffe were attached to the panzer troops with an adequate number of dive-bombers and fighter planes. The tendency of the Army General Staff to split up the forces of the Luftwaffe helped to bring about a perhaps excessive centralization of control in the Luftwaffe. In spite of this, it is impossible to agree unreservedly with the suggestion (page 15 -16) that the Army should be assigned its own attack air units.

The Commander in Chief of the Army could easily have found an opportunity to describe the Army's situation to the Ministers, but failed to do so (page 18).

A special study will be written on the future organization of a high command. However, it is necessary to contradict here the sentence (page 41), which reads: "The Supreme Commander of the Wehrmacht should not be the Head of the State at the same time." The greatest generals of all times have either simultaneously been heads of the state or else have made themselves heads of the state. A few examples are: Alexander the Great, Caesar, Jenghis Khan, Frederick the Great, Napoleon. Those who failed to obtain full control of the State were unable to prove fully effective, as was the case with Prince Eugene of Savoy, or failed completely, like Hannibal.

The statements by Generaloberst Halder that "organization was replaced by improvisation and training was neglected altogether" must also be refuted. In the first place, General Halder had no first-hand

knowledge of the work of the Army High Command after his dismissal. Furthermore, the achievements of the troops and of the command during the two and a half years of hard fighting from the autumn of 1942 to the end of the war prove that much good was accomplished in the above fields in spite of the very serious situation in the autumn of 1942, which found its first visible expression in the Stalingrad disaster. The organization was adjusted to the steadily increasing scarcity of resources and had to become more and more modest from year to year. An enormous amount of work was done for this purpose.

Only one of the Chiefs of Arms and Services, namely, the Chief of Panzer Forces, became an Inspector General, and even he remained within the organization of the Army and his position did not become a Wehrmacht office.

The charge that the Chief of the Army General Staff finally "sank to the position of a military private secretary to the War Lord Hitler" merits no discussion, since it obviously is not the fruit of calm deliberation. In any case, the successors of General Halder had more to suffer than he from the "decline of this once highly respected position", a decline which was largely brought about by Halder himself.

To the accurate character sketch of Generaloberst Beck by General Erfurth should be added a reference to Beck's tendency to procrastination and his lack of understanding for modern technical science. He found no common bond with Adolf Hitler and developed only a very cool relationship with his commander in chief, Generaloberst Freiherr von Fritsch.

4. MS # P-041 e, The Operations Branch

a. Comments by General Zeitzler. A clear account of the Operations Branch of the Army High Command is given, to which nothing can be added. Even the concluding judgment is appropriate though somewhat premature. Two points should be added to the three requirements listed at the end of the manuscript, namely:

(1) Only General Staff Corps officers who have performed satisfactorily in combat as well as in General Staff positions with troops should be employed in the Operations Branch. Occasionally, these officers should serve brief detachments with field staffs and in combat units. The difficulties which this requirement would involve are fully realized. Nonetheless, the requirement can and definitely must be met, since the Operations Branch, in particular, must not be allowed to lose close personal touch with conditions at the front.

(2) The Chief of the Operations Branch should not be changed during war, since any change would jeopardize the continuity, efficiency and speed of operations within the branch, to which the greatest importance should be attached. In Section I, Chapter 1 of MS # P-041 ii, I have mentioned that the operational control of the German Army has not been dealt with.

b. General Guderian agrees with the contents of this manuscript.

5. MS # P-041 f, The Organization Branch

a. Comments by General Zeitzler. The organizational problems of the Army High Command between 1938 and 1945 and their solution are

handled in a strikingly detailed and thorough manner. The manifold functions of the Army High Command and of the Army General Staff are concisely and correctly described, with particular stress on the difficulties caused by the interference of outside agencies, by the distrust and impractical viewpoints of higher levels and by the personal interests of certain individuals. These features are the chief characteristic of the period under study in the manuscript.

I am unable to comment on details prior to my assumption of office as Chief of the Army General Staff, but the principal organizational problem of that time, namely, the lack of manpower, has been correctly presented. This problem will be dealt with more fully in Chapter 2 of MS # P-041 ii.

What has been said about manpower applies equally to arms, ammunition and equipment. Here too, the division of authority and the lack of firm control was everywhere apparent, as will be revealed in later contributions dealing with organizational work in specific fields.

b. Comments by General Guderian. The author maintains that the German military, "accustomed to live on a plane above party ideologies", necessarily had to develop a certain opposition to the government in the Third Reich. This was not necessary; it is conceivable that better relations could have existed. However, the opposition actually did develop.

The data concerning German tanks on page 54 anticipate events. In 1942 the German Mark IV tank was still inferior to the Russian T 34.

In 1942 the infantry divisions still had no organic assault gun batteries, which were still GHQ units.

There was no absolute necessity for the German offensive of 1942 to culminate in the Stalingrad disaster because of the lack of replacements. Undoubtedly, mistakes were also made by the German command. That the effects of the defeat were so great was due to the fact that the Army High Command had committed allied troops along a front of several hundred kilometers on the Don River without incorporating German units in these contingents, which were very poorly armed and inadequately equipped for modern warfare.

The study unjustly criticizes the considerable organizational achievements of the last few years of the war. Thus, for example, it is alleged that after the 20 July 1944* "Volksgrenadier divisions, Volksartillery corps and similar units were organized, while existing divisions, which still possessed a high-quality nucleus, were neglected and sacrificed to an ever-increasing degree in the process." This refers to preparations for the Ardennes offensive.

After a total loss of twenty-six divisions had been sustained as the result of the collapse of Army Group Center in June 1944 - thus, shortly before the attempted assassination in July - the units which were being rehabilitated and reactivated in Germany, insofar as they were already fit for action, had to be sent to the Eastern Front immediately. It was only natural that all cadres saved from the collapse of Army Group Center were used in organizing Volksgrenadier divisions. Where no cadres were available, it was necessary, in the interests of both the Eastern and Western Fronts, to proceed without delay with the organization of completely new

* The attempted assassination of Hitler.

units. The fact that we succeeded in activating twenty-five Volksgrenadier divisions between August and September 1944 is a brilliant organisational achievement, which was followed by the equally worthy achievement of organizing a large number of artillery corps and rocket projector and armored brigades.

"The activation and commitment of units composed of boys" is something which I never heard about in the Army. Here the contributor should have furnished proofs. In any case, the Chief of the Army General Staff successfully opposed Himmler's efforts to induct sixteen-year-old boys into the Army right up to the end of the war.

The "top-level organization" of the Army High Command remained substantially unchanged after 1942. There can be no talk of "progressive disorganization." A few changes were made necessary by the changed military situation and these are mentioned in the supplements.*

The contributor concludes with the charge that "the persons responsible for organization lent themselves as blind servants to the forces of chaos." He has avoided mentioning these persons by name, which is not courageous. Furthermore, he forgets that these persons had to pay for some of the sins of the preceding years.

5. P-041 g, The Training Branch

a. Comments by General Zeitzler. This manuscript deals exhaustively with the training mission of the Army High Command before the war and during the first two phases of the war. In general, it needs no amplification.

* Bound as a separate manuscript, MS # P-041 jj.

However, one type of training deserves mention which has been omitted here as well as in the discussion of General Staff training. This is the training given to only a few individual General Staff Corps officers in the command and combat manuals of foreign armies. Officers familiar with these manuals commanded the enemy side in war games and training trips according to the actual combat and command principles of the enemy. This practice gave us valuable hints about the practicability of our own manuals. Demonstration units could also test these manuals during troop maneuvers and combat practice firing, ascertaining in this manner the practicability or impracticability of the foreign methods. Although this is only a minor detail, it is being added since it is considered highly important (see also P-041 f, III, 3).

MS # P-041 g also barely touches on both of the last phases of the war. This is a mistake, since, although the constant employment of officers and troops on active service and the growing disintegration of the top-level army command organization made it impossible to order or bring about any radical changes during this period, as far as training was concerned, everything possible and everything urgently necessary in this field was done.

b. Comments by General Guderian. The study shows that the author had just as little peacetime training experience as wartime combat experience.

Underestimating the effectiveness of modern weapons, the Army General Staff emphasized the importance of bold action in training, even in cases where the prospects of success (with respect to material and numbers) are

not immediately apparent; the troops should not overestimate the importance of materiel." This mistake had been made in World War I and was repeated in World War II in connection with the opening of the Russian campaign and before the declaration of war on the United States. Nothing has become known of any objections raised by the military command against these two political steps.

Was this due to the "progressive disorganization of our entire command apparatus", which allegedly paralyzed (page 4) any systematic influence on training? The "systematic influence" was never paralyzed, at least until 1942.

The contributor's historical statements on pages 23-24 are very inaccurate. At the beginning of the Western campaign there was only one "Panzergruppe"* that of von Kleist; later there were four. It was not "the infantry divisions which opened the front for the panzer forces". On the contrary, von Kleist's "Panzergruppe" smashed through the extended Maginot Line at and northwest of Sedan without the support of a single infantry division. There were no serious cases of traffic congestion along the roads and the traffic problem was easily solved.

In the second phase of the Western Campaign infantry divisions were to open a passage for the tanks across the Aisne at eight points between Chateau Porcien and the Argonne, but failed to do so except at one point. From the one bridgehead which was captured, the armored forces created the breakthrough which opened a passage across the Aisne for the Twelfth

* An armored force of the size of an army but operating in conjunction with an army (Reviewer).

Army and later for the Ninth Army and, by advancing along the rear of the hostile Vosges front as far as the Swiss border and capturing Belfort and Epinal, put an end to the defense of the Maginot Line.

This author also feels that he has an ax to grind with the armored forces. "The arbitrary manners of the armored forces from the very beginning," as he puts it, consisted exclusively of the coining of new German designations for new weapons and new methods. This "nomenclature" was beyond the grasp of some of the members of the Army Training Branch, who refused to issue the urgently needed field manuals "because the organization of the material they contained did not conform to that of the infantry manuals."

The contributor displays a complete ignorance of the nature of the Volksgrenadier divisions. These divisions were strictly Army divisions.

He also knows nothing about the Inspector General of Panzer Troops. Who was "disturbed" by the Inspector General? The work of the Inspector General did not lead to any "duplication of effort" nor did it cause any lack of uniformity in tactical views. It certainly had no "fatal consequences" (page 34). These are all mere phrases unsupported by proof.

The allegation (page 40) that "with the resignation of Generaloberst Halder the interest of the top-level Army command in the exercise of any systematic influence on training gradually disappeared" is untrue. A large number of new field manuals were published after 1942 and numerous new training aids were introduced. It was only after 1943 that the armored forces received any modern regulations at all.

Hence, the contributors final remarks are also erroneous.

7. MSS # P-041 b-i. The Intelligence Service

a. Comments by General Zeitzler. In a studious and copious treatment of the subject a very objective picture is presented, for the entire period before and during the war, of the entire intelligence service, its methods of handling information on foreign armies and German military service abroad, and of how the information gathered by the service was used.

The Assistant Chief of Staff IV (O.Qu. IV) and, after this position was abolished, the Eastern and Western Intelligence Branches, furnished valuable information to the Army High Command during the entire period, which proves how excellent their organization was and how soundly and diligently they worked.

However, as far as I can judge and as the chief of the Western Intelligence Branch repeatedly complained, the Chief of the Wehrmacht Operations Staff at no time made full use of the information supplied because the very objective and critical working methods of the branch chiefs were not in line with the views of the Wehrmacht Operations Staff.

The duties and working methods of the Eastern Intelligence Branch during the third phase of the war will be discussed by me in more detail in Chapter 2 of MS # P-041 ii.

Nothing need be added to the detailed and exhaustive treatment given the Attache Section of the Army General Staff in these manuscripts.

b. Comments by General Guderian. An objective account. The outstanding achievements of the Eastern Intelligence Branch under General

Gehlen should be particularly emphasized.

8. MS # P-041 k, The Army Chief Signal Officer

a. Comments by General Zeitzler. An extensive, perhaps too lengthy, account is given of the signal service as an instrument of the Army High Command.

Even during the third phase of the war this service fully accomplished its mission, so that nothing remains to be added.

However, no mention is made in the manuscript about the classification of telephone and teletype messages of the command according to their urgency as "Command Blitz", "Chief of Staff" and "Operations Officer" calls, and "Military Messages", "Very Urgent Messages", and so forth.* Since this classification greatly facilitated the working system of the Army High Command, it should have been mentioned. It would be advisable to have a Signal Corps specialist write a supplement to P-041 k, inasmuch as reference has been made to these types of calls in various contributions, for example, in the description of the working system of the Chief of Supply and Administration (MS # P-041 q).

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* "Command Blitz" (Fuehrungsblitzgespraech) was the highest priority in Army telephone communications. "Chief of Staff" (Chef) and "Operations Officer" (Ia) calls were not general priority classifications, but were used only in inter-office communication and came under the heading of exceptional calls. "Military Messages" (Fr-Schreiben) came under the second highest priority category in Army teletype communication. "Very Urgent Messages" (SSD-Schreiben) were the lowest priority category for urgent teletype messages (Translator).

b. Comments by General Guderian. I agree with the contents of this manuscript.

Like his predecessor, General Fellgiebel, General Praun rendered outstanding service.

The fact that we had a Wehrmacht (Armed Forces) signal service proved fully worthwhile.

9. MS # P-041 m, The Chief Infantry Officer

a. Comments by General Zeitzler. In P-041 m the Chief Infantry Officer gives a summary of his responsibilities and activities. His work was very important and he accomplished a great deal of good.

He correctly recognizes his principal problem, which was to raise the declining combat efficiency of the infantry, and points out the various measures planned and, in part, applied, to solve this problem.

I shall have more to say about this problem as a whole in Chapter 2 of MS # P-041 ii.

b. Comments by General Guderian. I agree with this account, which makes it possible to realize the unsatisfactory position of the Chief Infantry Officer attached to the Army High Command until the autumn of 1944.

10. MS # P-041 n, The Chief Artillery Officer

a. Comments by General Zeitzler. All artillery matters which concerned the Army High Command are very thoroughly described. Nothing need be added. A detailed discussion of the specifically artilleristic problems raised would exceed the scope of this study.

However, here again a detail which deserves mention has been omitted: An artillery division was organized and employed in combat during the third phase of the war. This was an innovation for the German Army and the Army High Command, so that it would be of interest to have an artillery specialist report briefly on the organization, commitment and experiences of the division.

b. Comments by General Guderian. I agree with this account. As in the case of the infantry, it enables one to realize the difficulties with which the Chiefs of Arms and Services attached to the Army High Command had to contend until the autumn of 1944.

The inadequate effect of our artillery against tanks has likewise been correctly emphasized.

One mistake should be corrected: The 38-ton antitank gun (page 79) was not developed by the artillery but by the armored forces. "Hetzer" was not the official designation of the gun.

11. MS # P-041 o. The Chief Engineer Officer

a. Comments by General Zeitzler. P-041 o shows the top-level representatives of the railway, fortress and other engineer arms in the Army High Command and their manifold duties. It also describes the parallelism of non-military agencies in this field, — "the Organisation Todt" and the Reich Labor Service — as well as special examples of interference by the Supreme Commander, Hitler, on the basis of his knowledge and talent as an architect.

The proper light must still be thrown on the failure of the Army

* A para-military construction organisation of the National Socialist Party, auxiliary to the Wehrmacht (Reviewer).

High Command to establish fortified rear positions at the right time. This will be done in Chapter 2 of MS # P-041 11. Otherwise, nothing need be added.

b. Comments by General Guderian. I agree with this account. Here, too, the functions of the Chiefs of Arms and Services attached to the Army High Command until the autumn of 1944 have been rightly described as a "half measure" (page 34).

12. MS # P-041 q. The Chief of Supply and Administration

a. Comments by General Zeitzler. This manuscript describes the organization, working procedure and efficacy of the Chief of Supply and Administration during World War II and constitutes a completely separate study within the over-all project. It exceeds the scope of the over-all study since it describes in minute detail the development of the post of "Chief of Supply and Administration" from 1870 to World War II as well as the organization, duties and activities of the agencies handling the supplies of army groups, armies, corps and divisions.

Since this treatise is well written and affords a complete insight into the workings of the entire supply service of the field forces, it should be left in its present form. A point to be decided is whether it should be retained as part of the over-all study, as P-041 q, or treated as a separate study. I have expressed my opinion in my general review (MS # P-041 11, Chapter 1).

As far as the contents of P-041 q are concerned there is nothing further to be said or added. It is complete and correct. One question remains to be answered, namely, whether the organization served the purpose for which it was created — whether it fully met the requirements of the command. This question must be answered in the affirmative. The operational command of the German Army during all the phases of the war would not have been possible if the Chief of Supply and Administration with his extensive organization had not performed his duties in such an exemplary manner. This fact must be especially emphasized, since the chronic ailment of the German supply service, namely, the acute shortage of supplies in all fields, could be ameliorated to some extent only by extra careful planning and the redoubled efforts of all agencies concerned.

In cases where the Chief of Supply and Administration and his organisation apparently failed in their mission this was not due to any failure on their part, but to interference or wrong decisions by the top-level command. The following two examples will substantiate this statement:

(a) Hitler alone is to blame for the fact that the German Army during the 1941-42 winter campaign in Russia lacked winter equipment, which, to outward appearances, had to be procured through a "Winter Drive" conducted by the Party. During the summer of 1941, when the Chief of Supply and Administration attempted in good time to obtain approval for the appropriate measures, he was thrown out by Hitler, who was of the opinion that the aggressive spirit of the troops would be impaired and the Blitzkrieg slowed down if preparations for a winter campaign became known.

(b) The impossibility of supplying Stalingrad was brought to Hitler's attention by the Chief of the Army General Staff in no uncertain terms, but this forewarning was flatly rejected by him, since he and Goering were of the opinion that it was perfectly possible to supply the troops there.

In view of the numerous Russian towns and villages mentioned, a map or sketch should be attached to this study, similar to the map which the author of P-041 r has attached to his study.

b. Comments by General Guderian. I agree with this account. The ill effects which the lack of an appropriate Wehrmacht organization had on the supply system have been correctly emphasized (page 20).

The preparations for the winter war of 1941 were inadequate. However, it is not right to gloss over the blame for this, as Generaloberst Zeitzler attempts to do. The necessary preparations could have been made without the knowledge of the troops. In any case, the impetus of the attack in the autumn of 1941 would have been increased and tens of thousands of casualties could have been avoided if the troops had received winter clothing at the right time.

13. MSS # P-041 r-a. The Transportation Service

a. Comments by General Zeitzler. In its four separate manuscripts*, this work constitutes a detailed, comprehensive and useful study on the organization, missions and activity of the office of the Chief Army Transportation Officer and its branches. This study is

* A fifth manuscript, which deals with the railway service, has not been completed.

of particular importance because, as far as the Army High Command was concerned, the railway service played a decisive role during the mobilisation and during the entire war, especially because Germany, on account of its geographical location, the limited motorization of the German military forces and the great lack of motor fuel, was totally dependent upon railway transportation. The command made tremendous, in fact, almost impossible demands on the railways, and these demands were met. This was due primarily to the efficiency of the office of the Chief Army Transportation Officer and its agencies. For this reason I fully agree with the praise which has been given to the work of the transportation service in the various manuscripts.

Many conferences were held by Party and civilian circles in attempts to usurp control from the military, but this would have been a mistake, since the control of military operations and transportation should be in one hand.

MSS # P-041 t and u are of particular value; they describe activities in Russia in detail and mention the many improvisations which were planned and carried out during the severe winter of 1941 - 1942. The principal problem of the Eastern campaign during the third phase of the war, that of the speedy transport of combat reserves to critical points, will be discussed by me in Chapter 2 of MS # P-041 ii.

As far as rivalry between the Chief of Supply and Administration and the Chief Transportation Officer (MS # P-041 r) and the problem concerning the subordination of the Chief Transportation Officer to the Chief of Supply

and Administration (referred to elsewhere), are concerned, it can be stated here that the latter move was opposed by the Chief of the Army General Staff because it would have led to one principal user agency controlling the military transportation service, a service which had also to satisfy the needs of other principal user agencies. In cases of disagreement between the Chief of Supply and Administration and the Chief Transportation Officer a decision had to be made by the Chief of the Army General Staff, generally an officer who was completely familiar with both of these fields through his early training.

One of the activities of the Chief Transportation Officer has not been mentioned and that is railway reconnaissance. For an appreciation of air force and other reports concerning railway traffic behind the enemy lines, the Chief of the Army General Staff must also consult the office of the Chief Transportation Officer, since the latter can furnish valuable information for the evaluation of railway traffic on the various lines behind the hostile front. It is the duty of the office of the Chief Transportation Officer to keep charts of railroad movements and graphs showing the rail traffic behind the enemy front. From these, deductions can be drawn concerning intended offensive action.

The reference on page 19, Chapter II, MS P-041 r, reading "I have described the railway transportation situation prevailing in Italy in a special report from Garmish, on 8 April 1947" is not enough. In order to complete the present study, the treatise alluded to should be attached or appropriate excerpts should be quoted.

The solution suggested in MS # P-041 t, Page 42, goes beyond the purpose of this treatise, which was only to show "how things were" and not "how things should have been."

The question as to whether the study on the transportation service should remain part of the over-all project or should be published separately as a special study has been discussed by me in Chapter 1, Section I of MS # P-041 ii.

b. Comments by General Guderian. A very instructive account in all its parts; the transportation service performed well as a Wehrmacht agency. The inadequate preparations for the 1941 winter had very harmful effects.

The deceased Chief of Wehrmacht Transportation, General Gehrke, deserves special mention.

14. MS # P-041 w. The Mapping and Survey Branch

a. Comments by General Zeitzler. Nothing need be said about the contents of this manuscript, which deals with the mapping and survey services of the Army High Command. As far as I can judge, both the organization and its work satisfied the requirements of the Army High Command in this field.

On the basis of my own practical experience I would point out the following details:

(1) The maps prepared for the Eastern campaign were in some respects very inaccurate. Roads and villages were often incorrectly marked, some omitted. This was not the fault of those who prepared the maps but was due to the lack of factual data.

(2) The unfamiliar Russian alphabet presented great difficulties in the reading of road signs and captured maps.

(3) The military geographical descriptions of Russia were of great importance for both the command and the field units.

b. Comments by General Guderian. The lack of a Wehrmacht cartographic office proved very disadvantageous. Otherwise, I have no remarks to make.

15. MS # P-041 x, The Central Branch

a. Comments by General Zeitzler. A lucid description is given of the work done in the Central Branch (G.Z.) of the Army General Staff, (later in Branch P-3* of the Army Personnel Office and the Central Branch together) in questions of personnel policy and the training of General Staff officers and candidates. Nothing can be added. I concur in the opinions expressed.

The transfer of the responsibility for the General Staff Corps personnel files to the Army Personnel Office, which occurred on 1 November 1942, was a mistake. It was "only with great reluctance" that I, as the Chief of the Army General Staff at that time, approved this measure. Upon entering office I was confronted with a fait accompli; the Commander in Chief of the Army had already given the order for the transfer and disliked rescinding it. This occurence will be discussed more fully in my comments on the Army Personnel Office (MS # P-041 hh) and in Chapter 2 of MS # P-041 ii.

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* The branch finally in charge of General Staff Corps personnel affairs (Reviewer).

b. General Guderian has no remarks to make.

16. MS # P-041 y, General for Special Assignments

General Zeitzler and General Guderian have no remarks to make.

17. MS # P-041 z, The Branch for Army Matters

General Zeitzler and General Guderian have no comments.

18. MS # P-041 aa, The Headquarters Commandant

a. Comments by General Zeitzler. This manuscript gives a description of the Army High Command and of the duties of the headquarters commandant, to which nothing can be added.

More emphasis should have been placed on the total mobilization measures introduced after the Chief of the General Staff had been replaced in September 1944*. This will be done in Chapter 2 of MS # P-041 ii.

Two corrections must be made in the text:

(1) Appendix 1 applies only to the fourth phase of the war. This is not indicated so that a wrong impression is created.

(2) The change in the Chiefs of the General Staff at the end of 1944 (page 18) occurred in July 1944.

b. General Guderian has no comments to make.

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* In late 1944 General der Infantry Walter von Unruh, who commanded the Army High Command Staff for Total Mobilization, was authorized to "comb" all staffs for personnel who could be released for service at the front. He was commonly referred to as General Heldenklau — the Hero-Snatching General (Reviewer).

19. MSS# P-041 bb - cc, Liaison Officers

a. Comments by General Zeitzler.

(1) P-041 bb gives a very interesting and fascinating account of the Army High Command liaison officer attached to the Finnish Army High Command.

I am unable to comment on the subject, since Finland was a Wehrmacht High Command theater of operations. Therefore, in accordance with Hitler's security directive*, I, as the Chief of the Army General Staff, was not fully informed about this subject. It is typical of the circumstances ruling in the Army High Command that it is through this report that I, for the first time, have received a full authentic account of what actually took place in and about Finland during the time I was Chief of the Army General Staff.

(2) P-041 cc, Chapter 1, describes the activity of the Army liaison officer with the Luftwaffe. My comments on this matter can be found in Chapter 2, Section VI, MS # P-041 11.

(3) The work of the Navy liaison officer attached to the Army High Command has not been described in any detail. This would be desirable in order to complete the treatise as a whole. I shall discuss this subject in Chapter 2, Section VI, MS # P-041 11, but only for my own term of office.

b. General Guderian has no comments to make.

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* Hitler Directive # 1, an order by Hitler that nobody was to be furnished information on any subject except what he had to know in the performance of his particular mission (Reviewer).

20. MS # P-041 dd. The Chief of Army Equipment and Commander of the Replacement Army

No comments by General Zeitzler or General Guderian.

21. MS # P-041 ee. The General Army Office

No comments by General Zeitzler or General Guderian.

22. MS # P-041 ff. The Army Ordnance Office

a. Comments by General Kurt Zeitzler. A comprehensive picture is given of the organization and manifold duties and activities of the Army Ordnance Office. It is not possible to make any appropriate comments on this study, since the Chief of the Army General Staff had no connection with nor any influence on the Army Ordnance Office during the third phase of the war.

It was only through his Organization Branch and the office of the Chief of Supply and Administration, which in turn negotiated directly with the appropriate offices of the Chief of Army Equipment and Commander of the Replacement Army, that he was able to express his wishes and the wishes of the armies on the Eastern Front. He himself was only invited to attend the weapons "demonstrations" held in Hitler's presence and was allowed to comment on their performance in the interests of his own office and on behalf of the armies on the Eastern Front, insofar as this was possible at a "pre-arranged" demonstration.

The theme common to the entire study will be found again in this manuscript in the duplication of effort and the confusion which the Supreme Commander himself created through his belated solutions.

The top-level organization proposed in Appendices 6 and 7 exceeds

the scope of this treatise, which is only supposed to show "how things were". The suggestions deal with "how things ought to have been".

b. Comments by General Heinz Guderian. A Wehrmacht Ordnance Office would have been necessary. Otherwise, no comments.

23. MS # P-041 gg, The Army Administration Office

a. Comments by General Kurt Zeitzler. This treatise provides a good summary of the organization and activities of the Army Administration Office.

The Army Administration Office had nothing to do with the Chief of the Army General Staff so that I cannot comment on the contents of the manuscript from a technical point of view. The interests of the Army General Staff and of the field forces in this field were represented by the Chief of Supply and Administration. As far as I recall, relations were generally without friction, as far as this was possible in view of the parallel nature of the two organizations and the fact that the office was subordinate to the Chief of the Wehrmacht High Command.

However, even in this field one sees the impracticability of the entire organization. That this finally was realized by Hitler himself is evidenced by his attempts at a reorganization as late as March 1945. This realization came too late, so that here once again we have the case of a wrong solution followed by another solution which came too late.

b. Comments by General Heinz Guderian. A Wehrmacht administration office would have been necessary. Otherwise no comments.

24. MS # P-041 hh, The Army Personnel Office

a. Comments by General Kurt Zeitzler. This manuscript gives a clear and comprehensive picture of the difficult situation of the German Army in respect to officer personnel and shows the special importance of a sound personnel policy as an instrument of command. For this reason, the principal problems must be given special attention in this commentary.

(1) General Staff Officers. This topic has been touched on in MS # P-041 hh. In Chapter 2 of MS # P-041 ii the matter is discussed still more fully.

(2) Command positions. Appointments to high command positions are of particular importance for the command system of an army. These appointments were supposed to be made by the Personnel Office with the approval of the Chief of the Army General Staff. Because of the nature of the top-level organization, this arrangement was soon limited to personnel problems on the Eastern Front, and even with respect to this front, Hitler generally made his own decisions. In Chapter 2 of MS # P-041 ii, the section entitled "Army Group Commanders", deals with this problem in greater detail.

(3) Hitler's Chief Adjutant as Chief of the Army Personnel Office. This cleverly conceived idea of appointing Hitler's Chief Adjutant as Chief of the Personnel Office is represented here as "strengthening the position of the Chief of the Army Personnel Office". I regard it as a regrettable weakening of this position. The Chief Adjutant was in no position to act as freely and forcefully toward his superior as an independent

Chief of the Personnel Office could have done. Hitler, however, was satisfied with this arrangement. Some of the peculiar steps taken by the author of MS # P-041 hh while he was chief of the Personnel Office and later by his successor, in the Rommel affair, for example, were a direct result of this arrangement.

(4) Senior Adjutant Service. By establishing courses for senior adjutants* and through the strong influence which the Chief of the Personnel Office exercised over these officers, the Chief of the Personnel Office intended to create some sort of a General Staff for himself. He also endeavored to prevent the subordination of these senior adjutants to the chiefs of staff of the higher commands. This endeavor was frustrated by the determined opposition of the Chief of the Army General Staff. In my opinion this entire plan was inspired by the ever distrusting Hitler, who wanted to bring about a division of authority even in the staffs of field units and to curtail the influence of the General Staff.

(5) Promotions. MS # P-041 hh shows very clearly what was done during the long war to cope with this extremely difficult problem. In my opinion, promotions were handed out too lavishly and too quickly during World War II, in contrast to World War I, when they were too few and too slow.

(6) Medals and Decorations. This problem can hardly be solved satisfactorily during a long war. A thorough discussion of the problem would have been in order, since, in the final analysis, it also

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* Referred to elsewhere as senior personnel officers (Reviewer).

affects morale and thus indirectly the command system of an army.

(7) National Socialist Guidance Officers. This problem should have been discussed at greater length. In my opinion it greatly influenced the command of the Army. Since this question did not become particularly acute until the fourth phase of the war, it will probably be dealt with in that chapter.

b. Comments by General Heinz Guderian. The Army Personnel Office was directed by General Keitel, the brother of Feldmarschall Keitel, in an efficient manner and according to the traditional principles of the German officer corps. When General Schmundt assumed this important post he proved a great idealist but also a blind admirer of Hitler. This was the cause of a number of the measures of the Army Personnel Office which have been criticized in this study; especially the regulations concerning promotions and the transfer of General Staff Corps personnel matters to the Army Personnel Office. However, Schmundt always continued to act in a correct way.

On 20 July 1944*, Schmundt sustained fatal injuries; he was succeeded by his deputy, General Burgdorf. This man was not only a fanatical adherent of the National Socialist Party, but also allowed himself to be greatly influenced by such men as Borman and Fegelein, with whom he was on terms of intimate friendship. Himmler also had a great influence on Burgdorf's military career and obtained an influence on the handling of the personnel files of high-ranking officers who he considered were in his way.

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* The attempted assassination of Hitler (Reviewer).

Burgdorf complied with every brutal wish of Hitler's without opposition — in the case of Rommel, for example — and was inclined to severity rather than leniency. He had become the evil genius of the officer corps. Since the Army Personnel Office was directly subordinate to Hitler after 1942 the pernicious influence of this man could not be curbed, and only rarely restrained, by the Chief of the Army General Staff.